



# Saint Peter's

UNIVERSITY

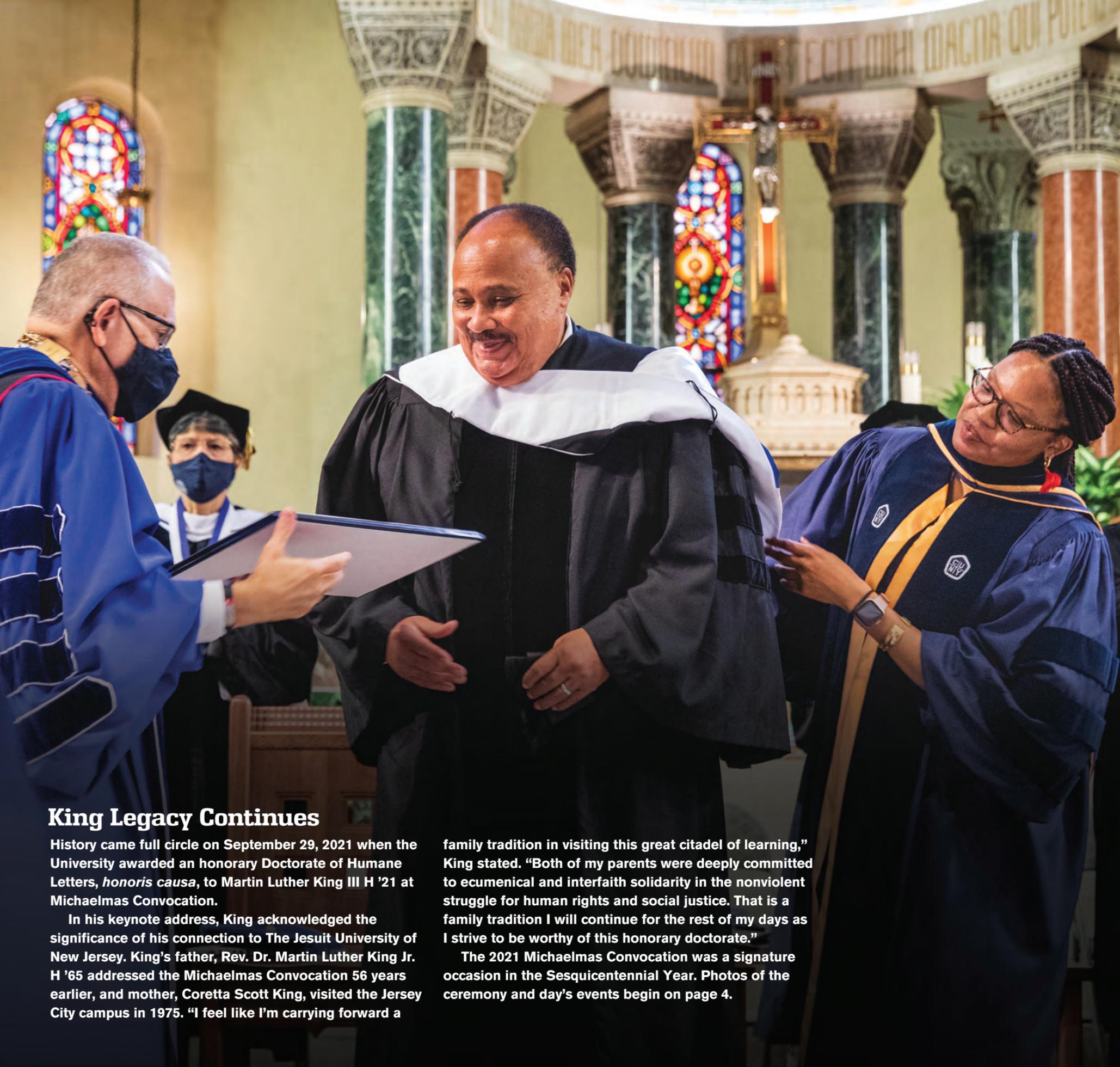
Magazine  
WINTER 2022



**150**  
1872-2022

CELEBRATING OUR SESQUICENTENNIAL

COMMEMORATIVE  
GIFT INSIDE!



## King Legacy Continues

History came full circle on September 29, 2021 when the University awarded an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, to Martin Luther King III H '21 at Michaelmas Convocation.

In his keynote address, King acknowledged the significance of his connection to The Jesuit University of New Jersey. King's father, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. H '65 addressed the Michaelmas Convocation 56 years earlier, and mother, Coretta Scott King, visited the Jersey City campus in 1975. "I feel like I'm carrying forward a

family tradition in visiting this great citadel of learning," King stated. "Both of my parents were deeply committed to ecumenical and interfaith solidarity in the nonviolent struggle for human rights and social justice. That is a family tradition I will continue for the rest of my days as I strive to be worthy of this honorary doctorate."

The 2021 Michaelmas Convocation was a signature occasion in the Sesquicentennial Year. Photos of the ceremony and day's events begin on page 4.

## Changing Trajectories



The work of Saint Peter's University has always been—and will always be—centered on changing the life trajectories of students. It's part of our long and storied history that we acknowledge with *Opportunity for Generations*, the theme chosen to honor our Sesquicentennial Year.

This institution has always taken the lead in creating a level playing field for higher education. We started locally, serving the sons, then daughters, of immigrants who found their way to Jersey City and Hudson County. Today, we welcome traditional students and adult learners who originate from 45 countries around the world and represent all faith traditions.

We celebrate the infinite possibility of Saint Peter's students knowing that the institution's trajectory is also on the rise. Recently, the University received two federal grants designated for HSIs (Hispanic Serving Institutions) totaling nearly \$7.8 million that will elevate our STEM initiatives and create more educational delivery methods to accommodate undergraduate and graduate learners. Unrestricted gifts for fiscal year 2021

crossed the \$2 million threshold for the first time in University history. Recent renovations of the Frank J. Guarini School of Business are complete and students and faculty are loving the new technology and transformed space.

The Run Baby Run Arena is open! The newly revamped space, combined with a full return to games and competition following a year of coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, has energized athletics and our entire campus community. I am deeply grateful to Tom Mac Mahon '68 for making the new facility possible, for his belief in our student-athletes and for naming the arena for the legendary 1967-68 men's basketball team.

Nearly two years ago, at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, I ended my letter for this

**"We celebrate the infinite possibility of Saint Peter's students knowing that the institution's trajectory is also on the rise."**

magazine with a hopeful prediction. There would be many challenges to navigate ahead, but we would get through this crisis together. And here we are, resilient, faithful and looking forward to the future. It is my sincere hope that you remain a part of the Saint Peter's story as we embark on the next 150 years.

Sincerely,

Eugene J. Cornacchia, Ph.D.  
President



## CELEBRATING OUR SESQUICENTENNIAL

- 10. Our Stories Are Shaped by Opportunity – *Reflection by Michelle Pérez '16 and Robert J. Andrews, Ed.D. '71*
- 12. The Moments That Made Saint Peter's University
- 22. 10 Minutes With... John DePalma '53 and Maia Bustamante '23
- 24. Run Baby Run Arena is open, plus a tribute to Saint Peter's most iconic team
- 32. Ad Finem – *Being Present* by Rev. Andrew Downing, S.J.



## DEPARTMENTS

- 3. University News
- 28. Peacock U
- 30. Advancement

*Class News & Notes and Requiescant in Pace will appear in the next issue of Saint Peter's University magazine. We continue to remember those we lost in prayer.*

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On the cover:  
President Eugene J. Cornacchia, Ph.D., and students kick off the Sesquicentennial Year in Panepinto Plaza.

## CONNECT



*Photographs taken on campus for this issue followed the University's coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic protocols.*



# Blessed by the Spirit



Mass of the Holy Spirit, celebrated by Jesuit schools and universities around the globe on September 15, 2021, was a dual celebration for Saint Peter's University.

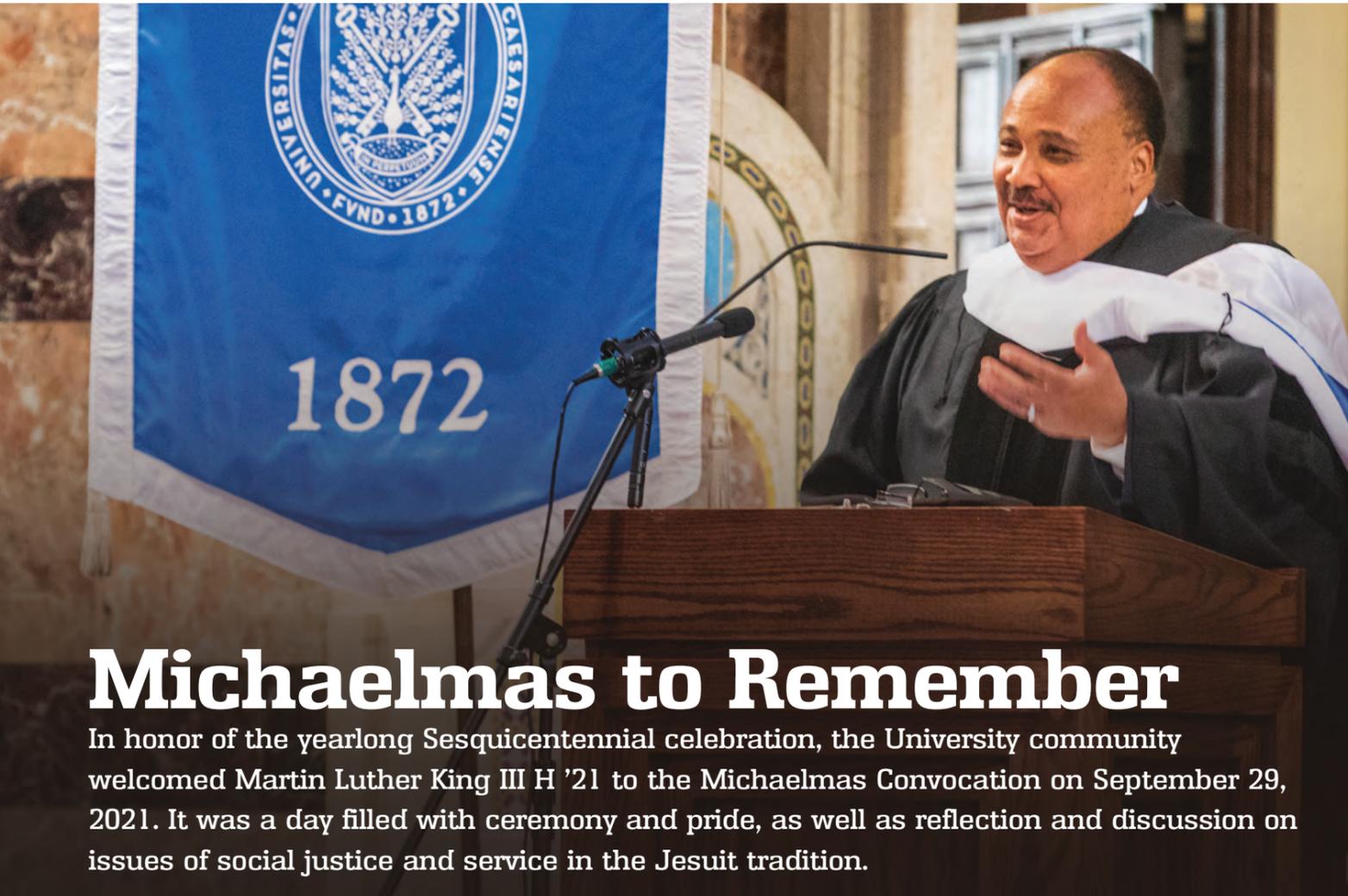
The University community observed the ancient tradition to begin the academic year, and to mark the official start of the Sesquicentennial Year. Following a year of mostly remote learning, the pews at St. Aedan's: The Saint Peter's University Church were filled with students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, trustees, regents and friends for the special occasion.

"I want to express my admiration and gratitude to all of you, as well as celebrate 150 wonderful years that this

venerable institution has served generations of women and men, most of whom belong to the first generation of college goers in their families, and many of whom came to these shores from far flung places around the world," said the Rev. Joseph O'Keefe, S.J., the Superior of the USA East Province of the Society of Jesus, who presided over the Mass.

In his homily, Fr. O'Keefe connected famous excerpts from the inaugural addresses of U.S. presidents to Christian tradition. He likened the historic addresses to Jesus' inaugural event where Christ laid out his agenda, drawn from the divine directive of the prophet Isaiah to, "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."

*Continued on page 6*



# Michaelmas to Remember

In honor of the yearlong Sesquicentennial celebration, the University community welcomed Martin Luther King III H '21 to the Michaelmas Convocation on September 29, 2021. It was a day filled with ceremony and pride, as well as reflection and discussion on issues of social justice and service in the Jesuit tradition.



4 Winter 2022



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**1.** Martin Luther King III H '21 and President Eugene Cornacchia, Ph.D. (center), with members of the Board of Trustees (L to R): Eugene Flinn '80, Joan Balmer Tully '72, Julie DiGioia, M.D., F.A.C.S. '73, Joseph Panepinto, Esq. '66 and Kevin Downes '73 **2.** Justin Gary '22, Hursith Adimulam '22 and Natalia Guillen '23 ask questions during the Q&A session for students with Martin Luther King III H '21 **3.** President Eugene Cornacchia, Ph.D., and Martin Luther King III H '21 **4.** Jessica Epstein, Ph.D., chair of the chemistry department and president of the faculty senate, and Maia Bustamante '23, president of the Student Government Association, lead the recessional **5.** The newest Most Noble Order of the Peacock inductees with President Eugene Cornacchia, Ph.D., and Martin Luther King III H '21 (L to R): David Dolgitzer '22, Fernando Murillo '22, James Apostolico '22, Elizabeth Hester '22, Jesse Resurreccion '22, Matthew Goodman '22, Anji Elnakady '22 and Valeria Moreno '22

**M**artin Luther King III H '21 had a lot to say about the past and present in the Michaelmas address he delivered to a rapt audience of students, faculty, administrators, alumni, parents and friends. The statesman, human rights advocate and fourth president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference recalled the ideal of Beloved Community espoused by his father, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. H '65, and applied it to current day struggles for equality and justice.

"We must begin to live and work together with the faith that we are all brothers and sisters in the great human family," said King. "The 'Beloved Community' we seek is not a place, but a state of heart and mind, a spirit of hope and goodwill that transcends all boundaries and embraces all creation."

The Michaelmas Convocation, which is held annually to honor student scholarship and academic achievement, was one of several events attended by King. He met with members of the University community for breakfast, spoke with the 10 seniors inducted into the Most Noble Order of the Peacock at a luncheon and fielded questions from students in McIntyre Conference Center. Justin Gary '22, a sociology and anthropology major, posed the final question of the day.

"I do believe for people in our generation who want to make a change, it was a significant event," said Gary after the session concluded. "We got to see someone, [King] who remembers events from the past and is passing the mantle on to the next generation. It was great."

**PETREAN MEDAL AWARDED**



John Michael Walsh, Ph.D. '68, professor *emeritus* of English, was awarded the Petrean Medal at Faculty Convocation by President Eugene J. Cornacchia, Ph.D. The Petrean Medal honors individuals and groups for their dedication and service to others, far-reaching influence, integrity and balance that are ideals of Jesuit education and the strength and courage required for leadership. The medal has only been awarded to 24 individuals. Dr. Walsh was recognized for his legacy at Saint Peter's as a professor, three-term department chair, secretary of Faculty Senate, interim academic vice president and much more. He has been working diligently on the digital historical timeline for the University that memorializes its 150th anniversary as a member of the Sesquicentennial Commission, led by Co-Chairs Virginia Bender, Ph.D. '78 and Eileen Poiani, Ph.D. HA '17. To view a full list of the members of the commission, visit [saintpeters.edu/150](http://saintpeters.edu/150).

**Blessed by the Spirit** *Continued from page 3*



President Eugene Cornacchia, Ph.D., and students celebrate the 150th anniversary of Saint Peter's University in Panepinto Plaza.

Fr. O'Keefe encouraged the Saint Peter's community to use the occasion to stretch beyond the usual way of doing things. "We ask the spirit of Jesus to comfort us in our afflictions and we pray that the spirit of Jesus afflict us in our comfort," he stated. "And in this University of learnings it is a time to open again minds and hearts to that blessed spirit who has been alive

and well in Jersey City for over 150 years. As we inaugurate this new year, we recommit ourselves to seek wisdom not only in the customary habits of places and mind, not only from the mouths of the highly esteemed, but to seek wisdom in places where we might not expect to find it."

The Mass was followed by festivities in Panepinto Plaza to celebrate the Sesquicentennial.

**VALUE THAT IS STILL HARD TO BEAT**



For the second consecutive year, Saint Peter's University is the Best Value in New Jersey according to the 2022 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges Rankings. In the Regional Universities North category published in September, the University went from 11th to seventh for value, ranked 11th in social mobility and sixth in economic diversity, in addition to being recognized among the top 25 schools for undergraduate teaching and for excellence in undergraduate nursing.

To determine the best value category, U.S. News & World Report considers an institution's academic quality and the net cost of attendance for a student who received the average level of need-based financial aid. Colleges and

universities ranked highest on the list had the best quality programs at the lowest cost. Saint Peter's increased graduation rates, reduced student debt and improved expert opinion score also contributed to the University's jump in the rankings.

"We are focused on providing our students with a fulfilling educational journey that produces positive outcomes after graduation," said Elizabeth Sullivan, vice president for enrollment management and marketing. "We are grateful that the U.S. News & World Report rankings continue to reflect our efforts and we hope it will inspire more students to consider Saint Peter's and the unique experience it offers."

Saint Peter's remains among the top 100 "Best Regional Universities in the North." The University ranked 58th in the category overall in 2022, a considerable climb of 17 places over the previous year.

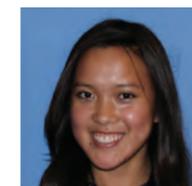
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES ELECTS SEVEN NEW MEMBERS**



**Noreen D. Beaman, CPA '86** is the president of Orion Advisor Solutions and a member of the company's board of directors. The former CEO of Brinker Capital, Beaman has been recognized as *Philadelphia Business Journal's* Most Admired CEO, and one of the *Investment-News' 2017 Women to Watch* for her contributions to the financial services industry. She earned a Bachelor of Science in accounting from Saint Peter's, the CPA designation in New Jersey and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.



Renowned breast cancer surgeon **Julia M. DiGioia, M.D., F.A.C.S. '73** is the regional director of breast surgical oncology for Hudson County for Englewood Health. After graduation from Saint Peter's, Dr. DiGioia earned a medical degree from Sapienza University of Rome and completed her residency at Jersey City Medical Center/UMDNJ. Recognized as a Top Doctor in numerous New York and New Jersey publications, Dr. DiGioia has contributed to multiple publications, is a diplomate of the American Board of Surgery, served as the medical director of the Cristie Kerr Women's Health Center and is an advisor to the American Cancer Foundation.



**Mary Beth Duong '21** is serving in the special one-year trustee term for a recent graduate. Duong earned her Bachelor of Science in biology with a minor in medicinal chemistry. She held a number of positions in student government, which included the sophomore class president, freshman class vice president, chief information officer and Student Government Association president. She also served as an orientation team leader and Pavo Society student ambassador. She is currently working as a medical scribe/assistant and personal caretaker for adult disability, while also volunteering at the Community Food Bank of New Jersey.



**George E. Martin, Ph.D.**, recently retired as president of St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, after leading the institution for 21 years. During his tenure, St. Edward's increased enrollment, attained top rankings, improved graduation rates and tripled the institution's endowment. Dr. Martin's career in higher education began at Saint Peter's University in 1969, where for 30 years he

served as a faculty member, department chair, academic dean and academic vice president. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science from St. John's University and a Master of Arts and Ph.D. in political science from Fordham University.



**Niurka "Nikki" E. Mederos '07, '10** is the director of the external affairs/outreach community at Hackensack Meridian Health Palisades Medical Center in North Bergen, N.J. At Saint Peter's University she has served as president of the alumni board, member of the Board of Regents and adjunct professor of business administration and health care. Mederos served as club president for the North Hudson Rotary Club from 2012-2014 and became the first Cuban-American to be named District Governor for Hudson, Bergen and Passaic counties in 2018. She holds a bachelor of professional studies and a M.B.A. in marketing and health care management from Saint Peter's.



**Christina M. Shea '00** is an audit partner in the New Jersey Financial Services practice of KPMG. She brings more than 20 years of experience providing financial statement audit, audit of internal control and due diligence services to the Board of Trustees. Shea previously served as the chair of the Board of Regents of which she had been a member since 2014. She has also served as the Regents' Audit Committee representative to the Board of Trustees since 2015 and previously served on the New Jersey Society of CPAs Scholarship Fund and the Northern New Jersey Multiple Sclerosis Board of Trustees. Shea holds a Bachelor of Science in accounting from Saint Peter's.



**Elnardo Webster, Ed.D. '69, '83** returns to the Board of Trustees after serving multiple terms from 2007-2018. A highly respected educator in the state of New Jersey, Dr. Webster is the director for Saint Peter's Center for After School and Expanded Learning, consultant for the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Education and retired superintendent of Roselle Public Schools. He holds a Bachelor of Science in sociology from Saint Peter's as well as a master's degree, and in 2000 he received a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Seton Hall University.

**UNIVERSITY AWARDED NEARLY \$7.8 MILLION IN FEDERAL GRANTS**

The U.S. Department of Education recognized the University's successful track record as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) with two major grants. A five-year federal grant totaling nearly \$4.8 million was awarded to Saint Peter's University in September 2021 to further bolster the attainment of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) degrees. The grant is designated for HSIs, the fastest growing higher education sector in the U.S. according to *Forbes* magazine. The award, the largest single grant in University history, follows the success of the \$3.8 million SURGE grant provided to Saint Peter's in 2016.

The Title III Part F STEM grant will establish the Institute for STEM Experiential Learning and enhance existing programs, resources and facilities. "This latest grant will help build upon our strength in STEM fields—not sustaining our efforts, but accelerating them," said Frederick Bonato, Ph.D., provost and vice president for academic affairs.

In October, the U.S. Department of Education announced a \$2.9 million Title V Developing HSI Program grant to Saint Peter's for a project titled *Ensuring Success for the New Majority*. The funds are designed to address the growing needs of diverse learners by improving flexible and affordable opportunities in online learning. University officials said the Title V resources will add institutional agility, allowing Saint Peter's to respond to the evolving needs of students and support future enrollment in undergraduate and graduate programs.

Maryellen Hamilton, Ph.D., professor and chair of the psychology department, who served as director of the SURGE grant, will also direct the new STEM grant.

**CAMPUS KITCHEN SERVES 100,000TH MEAL**



The Campus Kitchen served its 100,000th meal on September 21, 2021, and marked the milestone by honoring its food donor partners. The volunteer-based kitchen opened in 2014 and has made a significant difference in preventing food waste while providing nutritious meals to those in need.

**FRANK J. GUARINI SCHOOL OF BUSINESS HOLDS RIBBON CUTTING**

Recent renovations to the Frank J. Guarini School of Business are complete. University officials celebrated the milestone—and honored lead benefactor Hon. Frank J. Guarini H '94—with a ribbon cutting for the renovated space on October 20, 2021.

In 2019, Guarini made a transformational \$10 million gift to advance business education at Saint Peter's University. A portion of this gift was used to upgrade the lower level of Dinneen Hall. The space features a global finance lab, collaboration commons, new classrooms, project rooms and more, and provides a professional environment for business students to make the most of experiential learning opportunities that are a hallmark of the Guarini School of Business.



(L to R): Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Frederick Bonato, Ph.D., KPMG Dean of the Frank J. Guarini School of Business Mary Kate Naatus, Ph.D., President Eugene Coracchia, Ph.D., Hon. Frank Guarini H '94 and University Board Chair Frank Fekete, CPA '75

**ASK THE PROFESSORS**

**The Centre Pompidou, one of France's best known art institutions, has chosen Jersey City as the site of its first American outpost. What are the cultural and socioeconomic implications for Journal Square and the surrounding communities?**



Plans for the Centre Pompidou in Journal Square



**Scott Stoddart, Ph.D.**  
Department Chair, English and vice president of the Faculty Senate

The richness of Jersey City's diversity is undoubtedly why the Centre Pompidou chose this city for its first American site; its location in Journal Square will have a profoundly positive impact on the area, which has been in some flux since I began at Saint Peter's five years ago. It will infuse a vibrancy and glamour that our end of town needs, really changing the mood one has as you step off the PATH train, hopefully filling the empty lots with art and culture. For Saint Peter's, it will not only bring a first-class art museum to our doorstep, but it has already sparked a few departments in the College of Arts and Sciences to come together with plans to create a multi-disciplinary Museum Studies concentration.



**Samar Issa, Ph.D.**  
Assistant Professor of Economics & Finance  
Jersey City's government has been allocating significant financial and

human resources towards establishing the city as a regional hub for culture. Their goal is to refashion this historic city as a national (and even international) art destination, and the Centre Pompidou has the capacity to make this happen. From the presentation of masterpieces by famous artists to the creation of hands-on artistic and cultural experiences, Jersey City will attract not only the local community, but also visitors from all over the world. The return on this investment is expected to be very high in the form of creating new jobs and businesses. Furthermore, local students would greatly benefit from such an initiative through exposure to new cultures, perspectives, foreign talents and art masterpieces.



**Beatrice Mady, M.F.A.**  
Professor of Graphic Arts  
Centre Pompidou will undoubtedly help usher in a sophistication

and worldliness unseen in this city, paving the way for upscale shops, hotels and restaurants as evidenced in the building boom currently underway in and around Journal Square. The question in the art community is, will this be beneficial for the local artists of Jersey City? After all, without their pioneering spirit, this "art mecca" would not exist. The funding sources are not clear on this \$30+ million Pathside Building renovation. As artists have seen in SoHo, Tribeca and 111 1st Street in Jersey City, gentrification often pushes out the founding creators. My hope is that the museum will bring a new appreciation of art and artists.

# Our Stories Are Shaped by Opportunity

From generation to generation, opportunity is the common denominator that distinguishes the student experience and shapes the lives of Saint Peter's University graduates. Michelle Pérez '16 and Robert J. Andrews, Ed.D. '71, president and vice president of the Alumni Board, reflect on opportunities unique to Jesuit education that have evolved and remained true.

There's a recurring theme behind the stories of Saint Peter's alumni: opportunity. The paths we pursue, the accomplishments we achieve and the lives we lead have, in large part, been shaped by Saint Peter's University and its belief in extending opportunity to those who lack means or ready access to a college education.

Opportunity could take many shapes and forms at Saint Peter's, but none of it was by accident. Behind every experience or interaction, there was a plan, an Ignatian agenda that pushed you out of your comfort zone. Allowed you to demonstrate your abilities. Validated your worth. Helped you grow in confidence or claim your voice. Opened doors to occupations you never thought possible.

Of course, every school has a plan. The alchemy of the Saint Peter's plan (small Jesuit college, located in a city of immigrants, fueled by *cura personalis*) proved life altering for generation after generation of students.

As the respective president and vice president of the Alumni Board with graduation years four decades apart, we were asked to reflect on the Sesquicentennial theme, *Opportunity for Generations*, and how it defined our time at Saint Peter's. Where to begin? Opportunities that are an intrinsic part of a Jesuit education is a good place to start, because it exposed us to a core curriculum intended to test our intellect, spirit and social conscience.

Saint Peter's broadened our horizons. Those of us who sang in Glee Club, the Aidan C. McMullen Chorale or SCHOLA weren't limited to "rah-rah" songs. We performed in Spanish, French, German and Latin. We studied literature, sociology, biology and business through a moral and ethical lens—always! We traveled to Appalachia and Guatemala and bore witness to the struggles and suffering of others.

Our evolution was real. After graduation, we became scientists fluent in philosophy, accountants who volunteer in their communities, educational leaders who understand the value of human relationships and captains of industry who generously invest

in their communities. No matter the industry, all of them keep the Jesuit ideals of *cura personalis* at the forefront of what they do. That's a legacy all Peacocks share, no matter what Saint Peter's generation we represent.

Given the demands of the 21st century workplace, we recognize the growing importance of career opportunities—internships, experiential learning and practicums—that prepare students for life after college diploma. This, too, is part of the Ignatian plan, one that compelled us to pursue our goals. In every era of Saint Peter's history, you can find faculty with a special talent for bringing opportunities to light one didn't even know existed. The late John Benson, Ph.D. '53 introduced students from the 1960s, '70s and '80s to classical history and culture with an informative and unusually entertaining style. He spun a tale that kept students engaged and opened minds to new and exciting ideas regarding ancient politics, art and daily life and how they provide perspective on contemporary events and life. Likewise, David Surrey, Ph.D., professor of sociology, urban studies & anthropology, has a relentless belief in an undergraduate's capacity to conduct research, lead a team and defend their findings at academic conferences, even if you don't believe you're ready for all that. These are just two stories of how we gained confidence and courage through opportunity. Countless more exist and there are those that have yet to be written.

Opportunities will continue to change and evolve. We have great hope that the generations who come to Saint Peter's will continue to be bound by aspiration, the wherewithal to be successful in endeavors that transcend success and to strive to lead lives as men and women for others. Here's to the next 150 years of opportunity. 🦚

Michelle Pérez '16, president of the Alumni Board, is the cultural commissions coordinator for the New Jersey Department of State at the State of New Jersey and Robert J. Andrews, Ed.D. '71, vice president of the Alumni Board, is a retired high school and elementary school principal and currently serves as an adjunct professor in the Caulfield School of Education at Saint Peter's.



# The Moments That Made Saint Peter's University

At 150, Saint Peter's University is a diverse, faith-filled, forward-thinking institution, admired widely for living out its Ignatian principles and values. To celebrate the Sesquicentennial, here's a look back at some well-known and little-known milestones, events and developments that shaped the Saint Peter's of today.

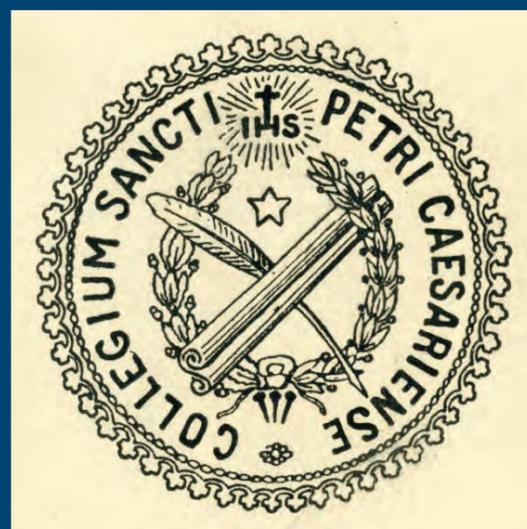


Hon. James Hamill (Class of 1897)

## 1906 Turning Point for Public Service

The 1906 election for federal, state and local office marked a big turning point for public service at Saint Peter's College. Hon. James A. Hamill (Class of 1897) won the race to represent the 10th District in the U.S. House of Representatives and became the first Saint Peter's graduate elected to Congress. The election was also notable because it ushered in an era of service-minded Saint Peter's alumni who went on to serve in the New Jersey State legislature and other municipal offices.

Public service became synonymous with Saint Peter's as generations of Jesuit educated graduates assumed leadership roles in government at every level. From the local Board of Education to federal judgeships and the U.S. Senate, Saint Peter's alumni established an illustrious legacy of advancing the common good.



## 1872-1889 Founding and Early Years of Saint Peter's College

Jersey City had a growing immigrant Catholic population in 1870 and a need for higher education that would serve as a gateway for bettering lives and communities. A group of Jesuits and clergy advocated for a college, and in 1872 Saint Peter's College was chartered by the New Jersey legislature with nearly unanimous approval. Saint Peter's became the first college in Jersey City, though the institution still had to be built.

The Society of Jesus had assumed responsibility for Saint Peter's Roman Catholic Church the previous year, and the provincial decreed the debt on the church be paid before construction on the College could begin. The bishop of Newark intervened, and the foundation for a permanent facility on Grand Street was laid in 1877. Saint Peter's opened in 1878 with a faculty of six Jesuits, two laymen and a student body that grew to more than 100 over the course of the academic year. The first Mass of the Holy Spirit was celebrated on September 4.

The first conferred academic degrees were awarded on June 25, 1889. That was the same academic year that the original seal of the College (pictured left) appeared on the cover of the 1888-1889 Student Handbook.

### Witness to History:

**"The new building on Grand Street erected for St. Peter's College...was yesterday thrown open to inspection from the public. The number of visitors was very large and they all seem pleased..."**

*— Excerpted from The Evening Journal, July 2, 1878*

## 1930 Saint Peter's Resurrects its Mission

After thriving for more than 50 years, Saint Peter's College was forced into hiatus due to World War I. In retrospect, the interruption was short-lived. In a book about the history of Saint Peter's, Rev. Richard J. Cronin, S.J., credits three Jesuits (Rev. James F. McDermott, S.J., Rev. Thomas Graham, S.J., and Rev. Joseph P. O'Reilly, S.J.), for never wavering from the unshakable conviction that there was a need for a Jesuit college in Jersey City. "They worked through the long night of 1918 to 1929, finally to see the dawn of 1930," Fr. Cronin wrote.

The academic year officially began on September 28 at the Mass of the Holy Spirit with a student body of approximately 85. Classes were held in the Chamber of Commerce Building at One Newark Avenue. Later that year, the iconic Peacock, a symbol of rebirth, was chosen as the mascot. To this day, the Peacock remains a unique and distinctive emblem of Saint Peter's.



## 1944 A National Imperative: More Nurses

Alleviating the nursing shortage—on the home front and abroad—was an urgent, national priority during World War II. In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the law creating the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps (CDC), and 100,000 student nurses were mobilized for accelerated training. "The Army and Navy need 2,500 nurses a month," Lucille Petry, director of the Division of Nurse Education of the U.S. Public Health Service, told *The New York Times* that year.

Schools of Nursing across the country were enlisted in the effort, as was Saint Peter's College, which welcomed a group of

35 women from the CDC for four months of training in 1944. Saint Peter's trained more than 300 nurses from 1944 to 1946 to meet the rapidly rising demand. The institution responded to the need for highly qualified nursing professionals again in 1981, when the Bachelor of Science in Nursing was introduced. With the School of Nursing established in 2007, Saint Peter's expanded nursing education at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels, helping to meet the growing need in clinical settings and preparing more nurse-educators to educate and train current and future generations in the profession.

### Witness to History:



**"We are gathered today now, 85 strong in our first freshman class. Christ is with us today and will be as long as he wants our little College, and as long as the College is true to him."**

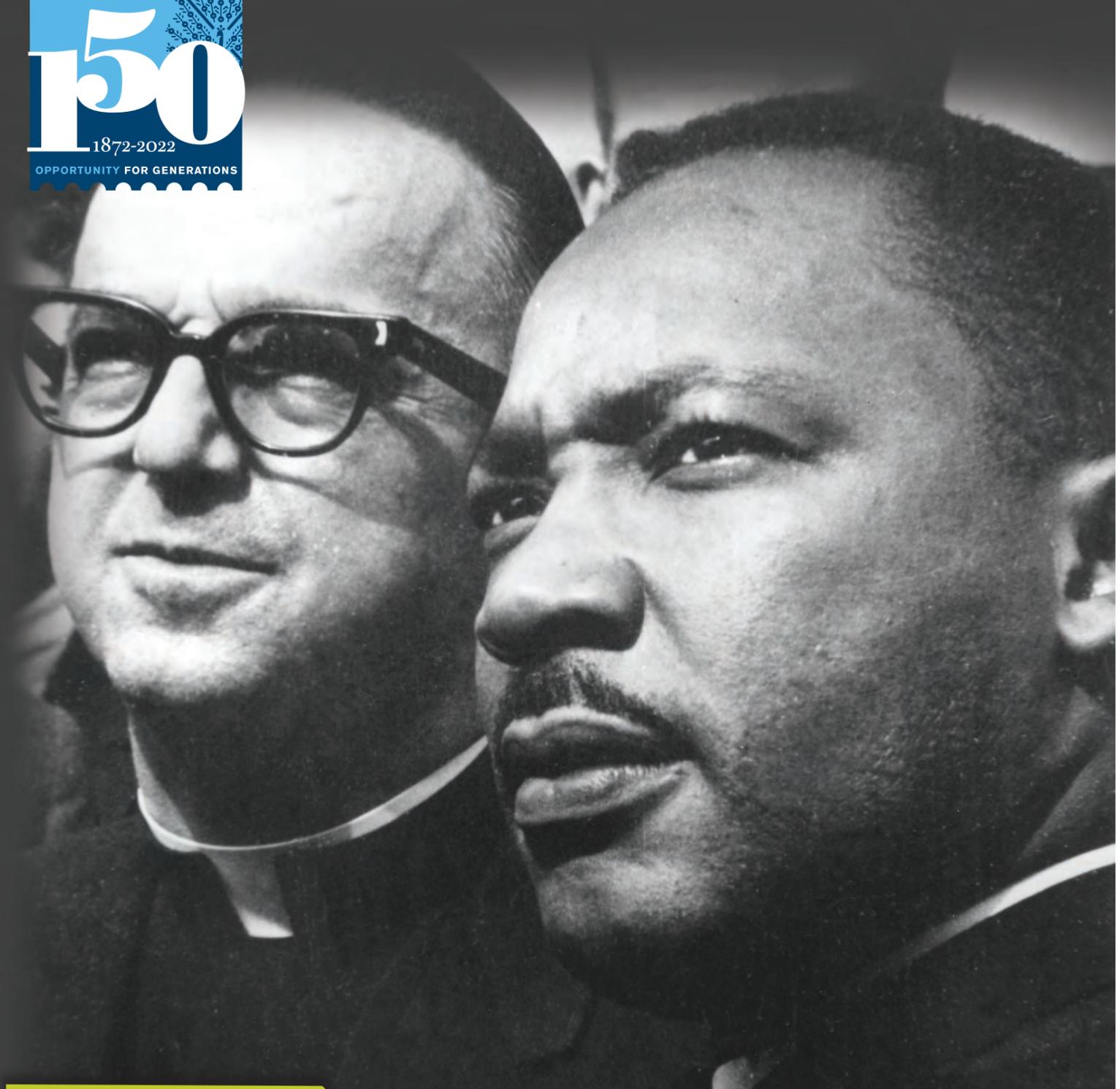
— Rev. Robert I. Gannon, S.J., dean of Saint Peter's College, in a sermon to freshmen at the Mass of the Holy Spirit on September 28, 1930



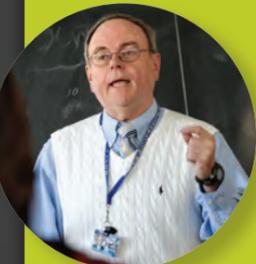
## 1934 First African American Student Enrolls

A graduate of Xavier High School, Hudson J. Oliver '39 told his parents, "I want a Catholic education all the way through." As recounted in a 2015 story for *The Fordham Ram*, Oliver was denied admission to Fordham University despite his competitive grades and accomplishments as a three-season athlete. Then, *America* editor Rev. John LaFarge, S.J., stepped in, and Oliver became the first Black student to enroll at Saint Peter's College in the fall of 1934.

"Going therefore, he teaches all nations the way of harmony," *Peacock Pie* editors inscribed alongside Oliver's graduation photo, but it would take several more decades before the Saint Peter's student body began to diversify. Today, when people visit the Jersey City campus, one of the first things they notice is Saint Peter's racial, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity, and its welcoming of students of all faith backgrounds.



**Witness to History:**



**“Dr. King was in the prime of his life, yet knew any day his life could be taken away from him—but it never stopped him from pursuing what is right. Then—President Rev. Victor R. Yanitelli, S.J., brought this man to campus and it changed my life.”**

— Kevin Callahan, J.D. '69, associate professor of criminal justice and retired Hudson County Superior Court judge

**1965  
Martin Luther King Jr. H '65  
Inspires a Generation**

September 22, 1965 was a consequential day in Saint Peter's history for many reasons. Civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. H '65 addressed more than 500 assembled in Dinneen Auditorium for the Michaelmas Convocation and shared his vision for the future of the American Dream. Saint Peter's also awarded Dr. King an honorary Doctor of Laws and Letters, the only Catholic college or university to do so.

The most remarkable part of the visit, however, was its impact on Saint Peter's students who witnessed the day's events and heard Dr. King speak on the progress and setbacks of the civil rights movement. “The time is always now,” he said in the Michaelmas address. “Although some will be scared, lose jobs and be called bad names, our problems will be solved. We shall overcome.” More than 50 years after the historic event, many Saint Peter's alumni trace their commitment to public service, justice and social change to Dr. King's visit.

**Witness to History:**



**“There were a few instances of people wearing buttons saying, ‘This is a man’s school,’ but I don’t ever remember being intimidated or upset by it.”**

— Kathleen Monahan, Ph.D. '70 professor emerita of English

**1966  
Catalysts of Change**

Saint Peter's College became the first co-educational Catholic college in New Jersey, when 100 women entered the Day Session in 1966. The cohort was preceded by a group of ambitious women who attended the Evening Division in the 1950s and '60s. Together, these trailblazers transformed life

on campus and opened doors for the women who followed them as students, faculty members and administrators.

Today, women at Saint Peter's represent more than 50 percent of the student body, make up 52.3 percent of faculty and account for 50 percent of the President's Cabinet.



**1968 Run Baby Run**

A tribute to the iconic Peacock basketball team starts on page 26.





ARSI - Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu

## 1972 Centennial Reaffirms Jesuit Ideals

November 1, 1972 marked the first time the Superior General of the Society of Jesus visited Jersey City. Rev. Pedro Arrupe, S.J., spoke at Saint Peter's College and Saint Peter's Prep for both institutions' centennial celebrations.

Fr. Arrupe served as superior general from 1965-1983. He has been called the second founder of the Society for leading the implementation of the Second Vatican Council and for his stance on matters of faith, justice and service. At Saint Peter's, Fr. Arrupe urged the 28 presidents of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities in attendance to rededicate their institutions to the ideals of Jesuit education: "Whatever else man is, in his depths he is a pilgrim, created in love and called to love. Love is his meaning; love is his measure." The Society of Jesus reaffirmed the University's Ignatian identity again in 2018, following the completion of the Mission Examen, a yearlong, community-wide, intensive study.

## 1979 Graduate Programs Reintroduced

Saint Peter's College granted advanced degrees in its early years yet reintroduced graduate education in 1979 when the Master of Arts in Education was established.

The demand for quality programs grew in education, business, nursing, public policy and other disciplines. Today, Saint Peter's offers 26 advanced degree programs at the master's and doctoral levels.

## 1980 MAAC is Established

The formation of the Big East Conference in 1979 presented a challenge for mid-sized programs like Saint Peter's College with storied histories in athletics. How could they continue to compete in NCAA Division I sports? The answer was the founding of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC). Saint Peter's administrators were big proponents of the MAAC, and the College was one of six charter members in 1980.

During the inaugural year of competition, the 1981-1982 Peacock women's basketball team represented the MAAC at the NIT. The women fell to Syracuse in the first round of the tournament. Today the MAAC consists of 11 schools located in New Jersey, New York and Connecticut. Peacock teams have thrived in the conference, combining for 22 league championships during that span. Saint Peter's student-athletes continue to excel in the classroom, with a graduate success rate of 95 percent as of the 2020-21 academic year, a year that also saw more than 140 students named to the MAAC Honor Roll.



### Witness to History:



**"One of the most important decisions in my life was to complete the MBA/MIS program at Saint Peter's University. I was taught in the program to use critical thinking and data analysis to solve everyday business problems. Over my 20 plus years of Admissions/Enrollment experience, these skills have helped me advance to the highest levels within Enrollment Management."**

— La Toro Yates '94, '98, vice president for student development and enrollment management at Hostos Community College/CUNY

## 1993 Whelan Hall Opens

Students mostly commuted to Saint Peter's College until the push to build on-campus housing began in the 1980s. Residential life received a big boost in 1991 from Thomas V. Whelan '68, who donated \$1 million—the largest single gift in Saint Peter's history at the time—to help fund a residence hall in honor of his parents, Florence and John Whelan. In 1993, Whelan Hall opened as a residence for freshmen, and the construction of Millennium Hall soon followed. With five residential halls acquired or built during the 1980s and '90s, the Peacock experience was immeasurably enriched.



### Witness to History:

**"In 1994, I was starting my career when I read of Tom Whelan's \$1 million donation for Whelan Hall. Two things struck me: first, the potential impact of a generous donation; and second, the tangible way to show gratitude to parents who encourage and support their children. I clipped that article and decided that I, too, wanted to make that impact, to change a life, to encourage someone to realize his or her full potential. Now, as I achieve that goal, I encourage everyone to make an impact in some way, in someone's life...it is the greatest gift one can give!"**

— Fausto Rotundo '91, CFO, COO and partner at Edgewood Management LLC





## 1994 Jersey City Gains Ground

“On, Off the Waterfront the Rumbblings of Growth,” a *Jersey Journal* article in early 1994, detailed the influx of financial firms moving to the downtown waterfront, as well as major development projects underway throughout Jersey City. It was a pivotal time for New Jersey’s second largest city and Saint Peter’s College.

Revitalization created new opportunities for students. The Goldman Sachs Local College Collaborative, the Student Managed Investment Fund with Lord Abbett and choice internships that provide invaluable experiences for students all stem from the city’s resurgence. During this period, Saint Peter’s location in Jersey City and proximity to New York also became a major selling point that boosted enrollment. Jersey City, too, has benefited from Saint Peter’s position as an anchor institution for 150 years. From The Campus Kitchen to the Ignite Institute, which acts as an incubator for local entrepreneurship, today’s University is a driving force of progress in Jersey City.

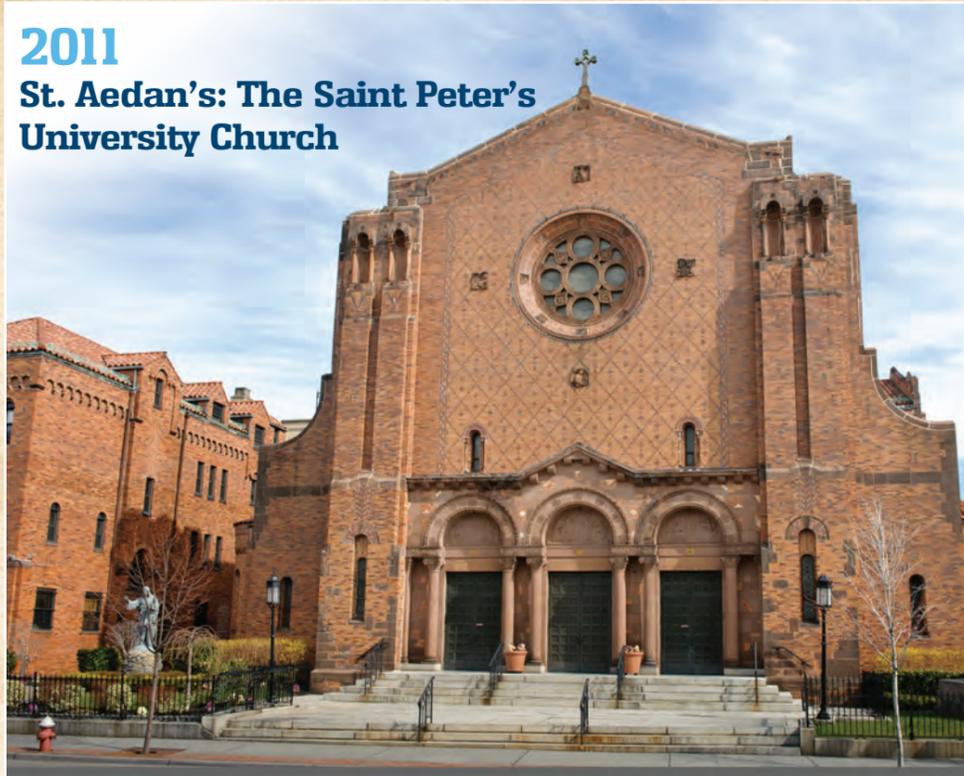
### Witness to History:



**“Jersey City underwent a total transformation. It’s much more of a destination than it was in the 1960s, ’70s and even ’80s. Every ward saw some redevelopment, the waterfront saw the greatest.”**

– *Harry Laurie '68, chief relocation officer, Jersey City Redevelopment Agency, 1971-2000*

## 2011 St. Aedan’s: The Saint Peter’s University Church



## 2012 University Status is Attained



## 2013 Mac Mahon Student Center Opens

### Witness to History:

**“VISION 2015 and the success of *Students at the Center: The Campaign for Saint Peter’s University* gave our community a sense of pride. We showed people that this institution could set ambitious goals and achieve those goals when we work hard and come together.”**



– *Kathleen McKenna, Esq. '75, partner at Proskauer LLP, chair of the Board of Trustees, 2008-2012*

## VISION 2015

Progress accelerated at Saint Peter’s College in monumental ways when Eugene J. Cornacchia, Ph.D., became president in 2007. The impetus was VISION 2015, an ambitious strategic plan announced in 2009 that built capacity and strengthened the institution’s academic and physical infrastructure. Over a five-year period, Saint Peter’s expanded degree programs, bolstered research and scholarly activity, renovated facilities and deepened Ignatian values and spirituality.

Three milestone achievements during this period set the stage for future growth, innovation and excellence. In 2011, an agreement with the Archdiocese of Newark established St. Aedan’s: The Saint Peter’s University Church. This eminent place of worship has been instrumental in strengthening Jesuit mission and identity. University status was attained in 2012, and Saint Peter’s reputation grew as a teaching university able to provide wide opportunities to students, while remaining true to individual care. In 2013, the Mac Mahon Student Center opened, thanks to a lead \$7.5 million gift from Thomas P. Mac Mahon ’68 and a record-breaking campaign involving thousands of alumni, donors and friends. The facility instantly became a catalyst for a flourishing campus community and neighborhood development.

## 2022 Looking Ahead



For 150 years, students have flocked to Saint Peter’s University for care of the whole person, or *cura personalis*, which instills purpose and elevates lives. As a dynamic Jesuit higher education institution, Saint Peter’s will continue to evolve its academic programs, instructional delivery and support services

in order to meet the needs of students and the greater society while remaining firmly committed to providing Opportunity for Generations.

View a full timeline of 150 years of Saint Peter’s history at [saintpeters.edu/150](http://saintpeters.edu/150).

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Founders’ Day Mass and Celebration with Saint Peter’s Prep**  
**April 3, 2022**



John DePalma '53 and  
Maia Bustamante '23

# Peacock Connection

**A recent FaceTime conversation between a loyal alumnus and current student-leader bridged two generations and 70 years of Saint Peter's University history. John DePalma '53 and Maia Bustamante '23 discussed their respective journeys to the University and the impact of Jesuit education on their lives. In this Sesquicentennial Year, the conversation illuminated the evolution of Saint Peter's and its enduring traditions and values.**

#### **Different sets of circumstances brought DePalma and Bustamante to Saint Peter's University.**

Born and raised in Elizabeth, N.J., DePalma was the first in his family to graduate high school, so college in 1949 was a distant dream. "Most of my cousins had to quit school to go to work. They had to hand in their paychecks to their parents," he explained. A swimming scholarship opened the door to Saint Peter's, but by the end of his freshman year, the athletic program was about to be eliminated.

DePalma thought he might have to leave college. Saint Peter's, however, continued the scholarship, a decision DePalma considers a big break that changed the trajectory of his life. He completed

a Bachelor of Science in accounting and after graduation, rose through the ranks of the Burroughs Corporation and Friden, Inc., before founding his own equipment leasing company.

Jesuit education, he said, instilled the confidence to take worthwhile risks, like accepting "a position that looked terrible on paper" and moving his family to Albany, N.Y. in 1964. "It was the best decision I ever made," DePalma continued. "I got promoted and pursued opportunities I would never have gotten had I stayed in New Jersey. It proved to me that I could make it anywhere."

"I've been around Saint Peter's a really long time," said Bustamante, whose parents, Maria Lansang Bustamante '91 and Leopoldo Bustamante '93, met at the University. Her older sister,



Anica, graduated from the University in 2018. Maia spent her early years in Metuchen, N.J. and when the family moved to Jersey City, she attended Saint Dominic Academy and even took a pre-college course at the University. Still, Saint Peter's wasn't a forgone con-

»» **"The Jesuits took a chance on me. They taught me how to become a student."**

clusion for college. She looked at other schools and ultimately decided to follow in her family's footsteps. "I really liked the small classes and one-on-one connections with the professors," she stated. "I can't be in a lecture hall with 400 students."

#### **Their lives as Saint Peter's students afforded little down time.**

DePalma held several part-time jobs to support himself while attending Saint Peter's. He worked in the campus cafeteria, a clothing store and made deliveries for a textile manufacturer in Elizabeth, N.J. Between classes and work, the only time for studying and schoolwork was 10:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. While that is still the scenario for many University undergraduates, present day Saint Peter's students also devote long hours to career preparation, gaining relevant work experience in the form of internships, externships, clinical practica and experiential learning.

Bustamante, an elementary education major and business management minor, is completing a student-teaching experience at a local school. She's devoted a great deal of time to student

government over the years and currently serves as president of the Student Government Association (SGA). "There is something for everyone here," she said. "Involvement, on or off campus, is how we make connections and further our opportunities to grow as individuals."

#### **Meeting for the first time, Peacocks can always find ways to connect.**

Bustamante, who grew up with Saint Peter's, was genuinely curious about DePalma's experience as a student. "How did Saint Peter's impact your life?" she asked. "Greatly," DePalma responded. "I started college at just above the poverty line and had a great professional life in technology and finance because of my education. I never would have had that, had I not gone to Saint Peter's."

When DePalma learned that Bustamante hopes to open and run her own educational enterprise one day, his seasoned business instincts kicked in. "Maia, make sure you take courses in economics and accounting," he advised. "You should learn economics to understand the movement of resources and wealth. Accounting will tell you where the money is going in a particular enterprise, where it's being spent and where it's being wasted."

#### **Across generations, Jesuit education is a gateway to building a foundation for a lifetime.**

"The Jesuits took a chance on me," said DePalma. "They taught me how to become a student. The discipline and intellectual curiosity I learned is the result of my education with some great professors." Influential teachers and role models included Rev. Lincoln Walsh, S.J., Rev. Augustine Grady, S.J., Rev. Herbert J. Clancy, S.J., Rev. J. Donald Monan, S.J., as well as Professors McInerney and Sullivan.

Bustamante clearly values the care and accompaniment she's received in her time at Saint Peter's. "Jesuit educated to me means *cura personalis*," she said. "The University is here for our wellbeing. I see that in everything we do here. The attention I've experienced as a student exposes you to so many things."

#### **Loyalty to Saint Peter's runs deep.**

As a servant-leader with the SGA, Bustamante recognizes the responsibility to pay it forward after she graduates from the University. "Saint Peter's feels like a family," said Bustamante. "I'm surrounded by people who are as motivated as I am. It's important for that to continue."

DePalma is a generous and longtime donor to the University. He recently made a significant leadership gift that provided critical support during the coronavirus, COVID-19 crisis. "The Jesuits supported me, so it's important for me to be loyal," he said. "It gave me a great deal of pleasure to do it. It's a great source of happiness and one of the best things I've ever done." 🙏

# Simply Spectacular

Peacock Nation reacted to the official opening of the Run Baby Run Arena on November 1, 2021 with a single word, “Wow!” The renovated facility, made largely possible by a \$5 million gift from Tom Mac Mahon '68, represents a big boost for Athletics and the Saint Peter's University campus community.



“It brings a new energy to what our coaches and student-athletes are doing every day on the court. Our teams are proud to call the Run Baby Run Arena home.”



In the four decades that Cathy (Amoroso) Wickiewicz '75 has rooted for Saint Peter's University basketball teams, she's never seen anything like the new Run Baby Run Arena, a shining state-of-the-art athletic facility named for the 1967-68 men's Peacock team that beat Duke on its way to the NIT semifinals.

“We've seen the highs and lows of the team and the many challenges of this gymnasium,” said Wickiewicz at the grand opening on November 1. “We're thrilled to see the new arena. It's a tribute to Saint Peter's basketball players, men and women who demonstrate grit every day and are part of this larger Peacock family,” Wickiewicz said. “That this is happening is incredible. We're thrilled.”

Both the men's and women's basketball teams, along with the volleyball team, will call the Run Baby Run Arena home. Complete with two jumbo video scoreboards, a new hardwood court, an allotment of seatback chairs, retractable bleachers, a new speaker system, improved acoustics and lighting and a reimagined entryway and Hall of Fame, the revamped arena is only the first phase of a long-term plan to update other areas within The Rev. Victor R. Yanitelli, S.J., Recreational Life Center (RLC). “I'm excited for people to see the Run Baby Run Arena,” said Director of Athletics Rachelle Paul. “Everything is different. You feel like you are in a modern arena and it's vastly improved.”

The arena was packed with cheering alumni, students, faculty and honored members of the Run Baby Run team for the inaugural game, a comfortable 90-66 victory over crosstown rivals New Jersey City University. Longtime Peacock fans like Wickiewicz and her husband, Thomas Wickiewicz, M.D. '72, who serves as the team's orthopedist, are hopeful the new arena will help attract talented players with the aim of replicating the '67-'68 team's success.

“I think it's a powerful tool for recruitment,” she said. “We go to all the other teams in the MAAC and see what they have to offer. Now maybe we're on somewhat of an equal footing.”

Upgrades to the arena were made largely in thanks to a \$5 million gift from Tom Mac Mahon '68 (pictured left with wife, Sally), a former chair of the Board of Trustees and star player for the Run Baby Run team, who named the facility in honor of his teammates.

“Universities should have an athletic structure, they should have a social structure and they should have, most importantly, an educational structure,” Mac Mahon said. “I'm delighted I was able to participate. It's phenomenal for the student-athletes, as well as students in general.”

Mac Mahon, who went on to become the chief executive of LabCorp, credits much of his professional success to time spent with his teammates on the court. He wants current and future Peacocks to have the same experience.

“I came here as a naive kid who lacked confidence. I don't know how I made the team, but I made the team,” he said. “I found friends for life and that gave me confidence that I never had before. I left here with goals, objectives and a belief in myself.”

Since the arena opened, Peacocks have a greater sense of ownership and pride in their program and the University. “It brings a new energy to what our coaches and student-athletes are doing every day on the court,” said Paul. “Our teams are proud to call the Run Baby Run Arena home.”

The long-term master plan for the RLC will upgrade nearly every facet of the facility. Subsequent phases will be announced as additional funding is secured.

“I think seeing the new Run Baby Run Arena and Hall of Fame come to fruition has gotten people excited about athletics,” said Paul. 🏀

# PAYING TRIBUTE TO AN ICONIC TEAM

Saint Peter's University honors the members of the Run Baby Run Team, whose grit and tenacity inspired the naming of the new arena.



The 1967-68 men's basketball team: Elnardo Webster, Ed.D. '69, '83, Kenny Grant '68, Gene O'Connell '70, Tom Mac Mahon '68, Harry Laurie '68, Mark Drew '69, Walter Wilk '69, Sam DePiano '69, Patrick Finnegan '70 and Bob Leckie '69. Players honored posthumously: Pete O'Dea '68, Tom Schwester '70 and Bill Twyman '69.



For members of the legendary Peacock basketball team that thrilled Saint Peter's and Jersey City with an improbable run in the 1968 NIT tournament, it's difficult to overstate how much of an upgrade the new Run Baby Run Arena is over the facilities they once used. "It's tremendous what they've been able to do with the facility," said Bob Leckie '69, the team's star guard who later went on to coach the Peacocks and was on hand for the arena's grand opening inside The Rev. Victor R. Yanitelli, S.J., Recreational Life Center (RLC) on November 1, 2021. "You could've fit four Collins Gyms in here. It was just a little bandbox."

Still, for the scrappy crew of undersized, mostly local kids who went on to topple mighty Duke on their way to the semifinals, the gritty facilities helped mold them. In addition to Collins Gym, they also played at the Jersey City Armory which, as Leckie recalled, had no heat in the winter.

"We had to run to keep ourselves warm, which turned out to be a good thing," he remarked.

And run they did. Leckie was the orchestrator of the team's fast break, which helped power forward Elnardo Webster, Ed.D. '69, '83 score 1,338 points in two seasons, including 51 points against Marshall in the opening round of the 1968 tournament.

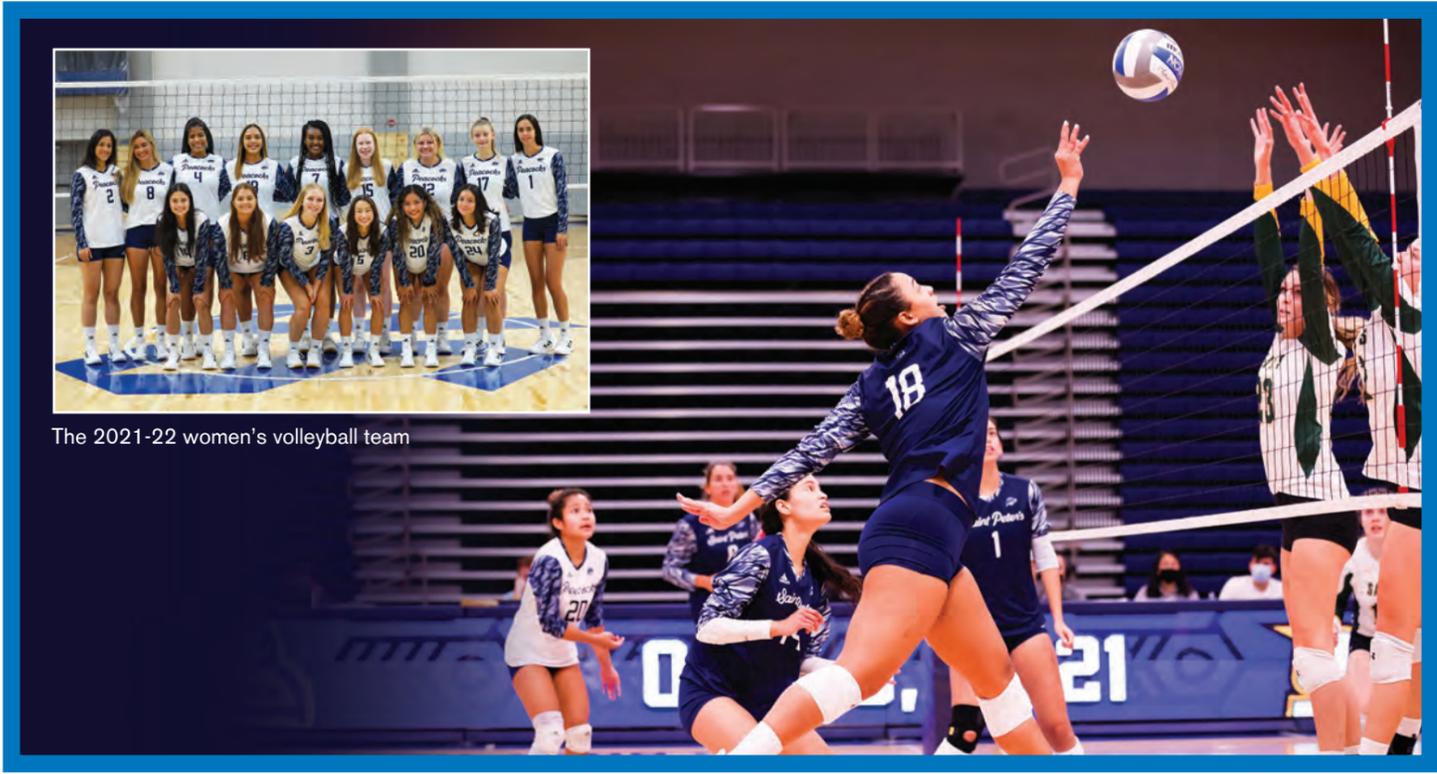
"Incredible," is how Dr. Webster described the new arena installation that pays tribute to each player and the Run Baby Run

team. "This brings back so many memories of that experience, not just for the team but for the whole Saint Peter's community and Jersey City at large. Jersey City was so proud of us, and the metropolitan area was behind us. We were David up against Goliath."

Leckie and Webster were two of 10 living members of the Run Baby Run team in attendance for the arena's official unveiling. Walter Wilk '69, Patrick Finnegan '70, Sam DePiano '69, Mark Drew '69, Gene O'Connell '70, Kenny Grant '68, Tom Mac Mahon '68 and Harry Laurie '68 were also there. In addition, Tom Schwester '70 and William Twyman, Sr., Esq. '69 were remembered in spirit, as well as Pete O'Dea '68 and Coach Don Kennedy, whose families were in attendance.

The former players were treated to a Peacock victory over New Jersey City University in an exhibition game as Saint Peter's kicked off its 2021-2022 season. Mac Mahon, who scored 902 points in his Peacock career and donated \$5 million to help fund the upgrades to the arena, hopes the team's new surroundings will inspire them to greatness.

"I hope they take the legacy of a team that excited Jersey City, excited Saint Peter's in a way that had probably never been seen in the history of Hudson County," Mac Mahon said. "And I hope they take motivation to stay together as friends for life, to study hard and play top basketball." 🏀



The 2021-22 women's volleyball team

# New Venue, New Spirit

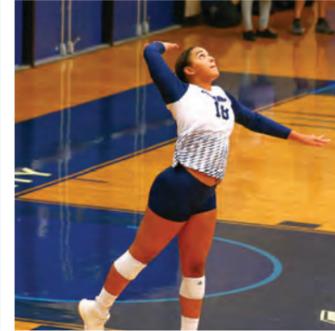
Peacock athletic contests are pulsing with renewed excitement, sparked by the new Run Baby Run Arena and a return to play for the University's fall sports. The state-of-the-art arena debuted on October 2, 2021 with a women's volleyball match against Marist College. "It felt amazing to be the first team to play there," recalled Angeleyshka M. Curbelo '22, team co-captain. "There was just so much enthusiasm from the fans. To see our names and pictures on the scoreboard as the game went on was exciting. It makes you want to put more of yourself out there."

While the nail biter ended in a narrow loss, Curbelo and her teammates considered it a victory against the pandemic that had kept them from competing for well over a year. Many student-athletes returned to campus last spring to train together, following strict safety protocols, but intercollegiate play wasn't permitted. The advent of the fall semester heralded a new Peacock spirit—in more ways than one.

"We are all just really thankful," Curbelo said. "We have this beautiful new facility where we can practice every day and play our home games. This season, there are also a lot more fans in the stands, not just for women's volleyball, but for all Saint Peter's sports. People are always stopping me to ask when the next home game is. All of the teams on campus are making an effort to get out there and cheer each other on."

With so much to do on campus now, Peacocks are eager to put the isolation of the pandemic behind them, she adds: "Everyone was stuck inside for so long. We really missed being together; there's only so much time you can spend watching Netflix or playing video games. Now, we have the opportunity to get together at games and other activities on campus. At our games, we've had a lot more crowds than ever before. We're all sticking together and supporting each other." 🦋

PURCHASE YOUR  
**PEACOCK PLAQUE**  
TODAY!



**SAINT  
PETER'S**



Purchase a plaque in support of the Peacock Nation athletics fund, the Run Baby Run Arena or a specific athletic program at the following level(s) and qualify for a personalized plaque to be installed on a seat in the arena:

- **Seat Sponsor**
  - \$500 level includes a plaque on a permanent seatback chair
- **Peacock Flock Sponsor — honor a group of Peacock supporters with an entire row!**
  - \$5,000 level includes plaques on an entire row (14 seats) of permanent seatback chairs

[saintpeterspeacocks.com/peacockplaque](http://saintpeterspeacocks.com/peacockplaque)



Marc Mitchell, head women's basketball coach, Vice President for Mission and Ministry Rev. Andrew Downing, S.J., President Eugene Cornacchia, Ph.D., Director of Athletics Rachelle Paul, Tom Mac Mahon '68 and Shaheen Holloway, head men's basketball coach

## A Blessing for the Run Baby Run Arena

On September 23, 2021, a ribbon cutting ceremony was held at the Run Baby Run Arena. Student-athletes, coaches and members of the University community gathered to hear thoughts from President Eugene J. Cornacchia, Ph.D., and Thomas P. Mac Mahon '68, whose generous \$5 million gift largely funded the upgrades to the arena, which is named to honor his 1967-68 men's basketball teammates. Vice President for Mission and Ministry Rev. Andrew Downing, S.J., offered a blessing that expressed gratitude for the new facility and celebrated the Peacock ethos of hard work, camaraderie and teamwork.

# Rising to the Occasion

Challenging times can test an institution's resilience. Our donor community—alumni, board members, corporate partners and friends—galvanized support for the fiscal year, July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021, to ensure students continued their Jesuit education and to sustain Saint Peter's University. Thanks to your generosity, the University celebrates its Sesquicentennial Year with renewed optimism and faith in our future. A.M.D.G.!

## THE BIG PICTURE

Total raised in FY21: **\$7,886,015**

**\$2,198,708** awarded to

**289** students in donor-funded scholarships.

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IS WAY UP

Participation, at all levels of giving from all sectors of the community, signals strength and a great belief in an institution's mission. Across the board, Saint Peter's participation levels increased by single and double digits.

First-time donors increased **47%**

**55%** increase in GOLD donors  
(Graduates of the Last Decade)

Alumni donors increased by nearly **8%**

Number of overall donors increased by **8%**

President's Council members increased by **18%**

## FIRST TIME IN UNIVERSITY HISTORY

**\$2,091,419**  
**UNRESTRICTED GIVING TOTAL**

Unrestricted gifts allow Saint Peter's to pivot and respond to the greatest and most critical needs. Thank you for placing your trust in us.



Thank you for Zooming in with us!  
Alumni and friends participated in **408** virtual meetings with the advancement team.



## MOST SUCCESSFUL HEARTS & MINDS IS IN THE BOOKS!

- Held virtually for the first time, drawing more than 150 participants from Jersey City and locations around the world
- Grossed more than \$400,000, the highest amount ever raised on record
- Proceeds benefited the General Scholarship Fund

The University community will celebrate the 2022 Hearts & Minds on May 6, 2022.

## Millions Raised in Legacy Challenge

The Legacy Challenge was the most successful planned giving program ever launched by Saint Peter's University, raising more than **\$3 million** and increasing the number of new planned gifts by more than **325 percent** over last year.

# Being Present

by Rev. Andrew Downing, S.J., vice president for mission and ministry



The beginning of the academic year this fall at Saint Peter's University was a far different experience than that of last fall. Although the University continued to conduct classes online, and residence halls were never completely empty of students, the campus was largely in hibernation through the past year of the pandemic. The quads, the library, even the cafeteria, were blessedly quiet... but sadly missing their usual bustle and life. This September witnessed the return of all those who give the campus life: students and faculty, staff and guests. With a return to in-person instruction, Saint Peter's campus—with the addition of masks—looks much like it always has. The excitement to be back together after so many months of enforced seclusion was palpable and led to an energetic start to the year. What have we learned from this?

We have certainly learned many lessons, navigating the unfamiliar, anxious moments of the past year. All of us have. Faculty learned in short order how to transform their classroom teaching and interaction into online courses through the use of new digital platforms. Students learned this new reality and adapted to a new mode of education, going to college through a laptop or phone from their bedrooms and kitchens. Amazing what could be accomplished with a device and a WiFi signal! It had its moments of frustration—it had its many moments of frustration—but we were grateful that a year of sheltering in place came when we had the technology to stay connected. And connected we stayed, forgetting that before the pandemic, we used to wonder whether

being connected was really as good as being present to one another.

Has the pandemic taught us the value of being present? Being back on campus this year has been a joy for the whole Saint Peter's community for many reasons, but more than anything else, because we can be present, in person, with and for one another. For most students, being present in the classroom means far more effective learning. For most professors, it means far more effective teaching and mentoring. For everyone, our presence on campus this Sesquicentennial Year reminds us that much more than the buildings or programs, *we* are Saint Peter's University. And we have been reminded that there is a kind of community that can only emerge when we are with each other—when all of ourselves, bodies included—are present to each other, listening to the other's voice, seeing the other's face, expressing who we are to each other. With that, we have been reminded there is a kind of education that can only happen when we put all of ourselves in a space, where we are present to and for others, a space like Saint Peter's.

Coming together in person is not without its risks. The pandemic has taught us all *that* lesson, as well. But the risk of contagion is not the only one we face, nor is every risk to be avoided. To be truly present to another person—student, professor, friend or stranger—is to risk an encounter. It is to risk experiencing someone, who may change the way you look at yourself or the world. It is to risk being seen, in your flesh and skin, and so to risk being implicated in the world, held in some way responsible for the way things are... and for how they might become. It is to risk what is at the heart of a Jesuit education: transformation. As we continue the year in person, we can be grateful that Saint Peter's is able to teach the value of being present, for that's a lesson we may all need to learn and learn again. 📖

*Rev. Andrew Downing, S.J., has served as vice president for mission and ministry since 2020. He holds a B.A. in religious studies from Yale University, a Licentiate of Sacred Theology, S.T.L. from the Weston Jesuit School of Theology and a M.A. in philosophical resources from Fordham University. Fr. Downing completed his studies at the University of Notre Dame, where he earned a Ph.D. in theology in 2014.*



## SAVE THE DATE Saint Peter Day

April 6, 2022

Each year, Saint Peter Day represents more than simply a time to raise much-needed funds for Saint Peter's University. It is a reminder of the power of the Peacock community and its commitment to today's students.

Join us for a special Sesquicentennial edition of Saint Peter Day this year as we celebrate the 150th anniversary of our founding. For 24 hours, we will fundraise to honor our past, support our present and celebrate our future.

The day will feature special matching gift challenges and limited edition thank you gifts at a variety of giving levels.

To learn more, please contact Scott Donovan, director of annual giving, at [sdonovan@saintpeters.edu](mailto:sdonovan@saintpeters.edu).

[saintpeters.edu/give](https://saintpeters.edu/give)



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# Save the Date

# Hearts Minds

The Saint Peter's University Scholarship Celebration

May 6, 2022

6:30 p.m.

Maritime Parc, Jersey City

(855) 772-1000 | [heartsandminds@saintpeters.edu](mailto:heartsandminds@saintpeters.edu)